

The Jhabua Development Communication Project (JDGP)

Unit III

The Jhabua Development Communication Project an innovative broadcasting experiment is presently under way in the rural, hilly hinterlands of Jhabua district in India's Madhya Pradesh State.

Jhabua's residents are India's poorest and 85 per cent population is tribal and its literacy rate is 15 percent.

The Jhabua Development Communication Project (JDGP) was launched in mid 1990s. The purpose is to experiment with the utilization of an interactive satellite-based broadcasting network to support development and education in remote, rural areas of India.

Some 150 direct-reception systems like satellite dish, TV sets, VCRs, and other equipment have been installed in several villages of Jhabua, which receive television broadcasts for two hours every evening from Development and Educational Communication Unit's Ahmedabad studio, uplinked through satellite.

Also, 12 talkback terminals have been installed in each of the block headquarters of Jhabua district, through which village functionaries ask questions, provide feedback, and report on the progress.

The evening television of Jhabua Development Communication Project broadcasts, on topics like health, education, watershed management, agriculture, natural forestry, and local governance that were designed to be entertaining and educational.

The programmes of this project are made with the active participation of the local people of Jhabua, as was in the case in the Kheda Communication Project.

Interactive training programmes are conducted in afternoon through the talkback terminals with a range of village functionaries like teachers, anganwadi workers, hand pump mechanics, and local Panchayat members.

Information flows in Jhabua Development Communication Project are thus both downward and upward, connecting the rural audience of Jhabua with media producers in Ahmedabad in a continuous circle of feedback and feed-forward.

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